

REMARKS

Applicants appreciate the Examiner's thorough review of the present application, and respectfully request reconsideration in light of the preceding amendments and the following remarks.

Claims 2-3, 5, 12-15 and 21-27 are pending in the instant application. Claims 2-3, 5, 12-15 have been amended to better define the claimed invention. New claims 21-27 have been added to provide Applicants with the scope of protection to which they are believed entitled. No new matter has been introduced through the foregoing amendments.

The new grounds of rejection relying on newly cited and applied *Harris* (U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2003/0173018) and *Fahrenkrug* (U.S. Patent No. 4,891,258) are believed overcome in view of the above amendments.

In particular, amended claim 2 additionally recites that at least two of said core and said sheets are bonded together by said adhesive lines in regions free of said elastic members. The claim limitation finds support in at least FIG. 2, at regions of adhesive lines 15 that are not coexistent with elastic members 24, 25. The primary reference of *Harris* appears to teach in FIGs. 7-11 various adhesive patterns, which, unlike the adhesive patterns disclosed in the instant application that bond the topsheet and/or backsheet and/or core together, are configured to bond elastic strands to at least one of two facing layers. It appears that the two facing layers might also be bonded by the *Harris* adhesive patterns. This bonding occurs, however, in the vicinity of the elastic strands only. Therefore, *Harris* does not teach or suggest that the sheets and core are bonded by the adhesive lines in regions free of the elastic members, as presently claimed.

In addition, Applicants respectfully disagree with the Examiner's statement that *Harris* teaches the claimed adhesive quantities in paragraph [0037]. It should be noted that claim 2 recites two different ranges for the first and second adhesive zones, respectively. *Harris* does not disclose such. In paragraph [0037] of *Harris*, the reference at best teaches at line 4 from bottom an add-on rate of adhesive which appears to be indicative of the total adhesive quantity for both first and second zones. The reference clearly fails to teach or suggest two separate adhesive quantity ranges for first and second zones as recited in claim 2.

Amended claim 3 additionally recites that some of the adhesive lines are disposed between and directly bond the elastic members to said at least one of said sheets, whereas the remaining adhesive lines are disposed between and permanently and directly bond at least two of said core and said sheets together without directly bonding the elastic members to any of said core and sheets. The claim limitation finds support in at least FIG. 2, at adhesive lines 14 that do not directly bond any of the elastics 24, 25 to any of the sheets and core. As discussed above with respect to claim 2, since the adhesive lines of *Harris* are configured to bond elastic strands to at least one of two facing layers, all adhesive lines of *Harris* must bond at least one of the elastic strands to the facing layer(s). *Harris* does not teach or suggest adhesive lines that do not bond the elastic strands to the facing layers, contrary to the claimed invention.

Amended claim 5 additionally recites that said sheets are bonded together by said adhesive lines at surfaces that are not directly bonded to said elastic members. The claim limitation finds support in at least FIG. 2, at the surface carrying adhesive lines 14 and the facing surface of core 4 which are bonded together without being bonded to any of the elastics 24, 25. As discussed above with respect to claim 2, if the two facing layers are also bonded by the *Harris* adhesive patterns, the facing and bonded surfaces of the facing layers must be those which are directly bonded to the elastic strands by the adhesive lines, contrary to the claimed invention.

Amended claim 12 additionally recites that all said adhesive lines are straight lines parallel to the longitudinal direction of said article. The claim limitation finds support in at least FIG. 2, at adhesive lines 11, 14, 15, 19, and 23 which are all straight lines parallel to the longitudinal direction. The *Harris* adhesive lines must be oriented in the direction of the elastic strands and must be either transverse to (waist elastics) or oblique/curved (leg elastics) relative to the longitudinal direction. The *Harris* adhesive lines are not all straight and parallel to the longitudinal direction as presently claimed.

Amended claim 13 additionally recites that the adhesive lines are non-intersecting wavy lines each of which does not intersect itself; and the first zones of each of said wavy adhesive lines are located at both crests and troughs of said wavy adhesive line. The claim limitation finds support in at least FIG. 8, at adhesive lines 53. *Harris* appears to disclose some “wavy” lines in FIGs. 8 and 8A. However, the first zones 122 in such “wavy” lines are all located at either the crests or the

troughs. *Harris* does not teach or suggest first zones that are at both crests and troughs as presently claimed.

Amended claim 14 additionally recites that the adhesive lines on opposite surfaces of the core have different patterns. The claim limitation finds support in at least FIG. 8, at adhesive lines 53 and 51 which have different patterns. The *Harris* adhesive lines are used to bonded the elastic strands and should not be presented on any of the surfaces of the core. *Harris* also fails to teach or suggest that adhesive lines with different patterns can be used in the same article, contrary to the claimed invention.

Amended claim 15 additionally recites that each of said adhesive lines continuously extends in a given direction while repeatedly looping to intersect itself at a plurality of intersections and to define a plurality of loops arranged successively in said given direction and connecting segments that connect adjacent said loops at said intersections; and at least one of the first zones on each of said adhesive lines is not located at any of said intersections of said adhesive line. The claim limitation finds support in at least FIG. 11, at adhesive zone 59. *Harris* appears to disclose repeatedly looping adhesive lines in FIG. 7. However, all first zones in each adhesive line in FIG. 7 of *Harris* are located at the intersections, contrary to the claimed invention.

Claims 21-27 depend from claim 15, 14 or 3, and are considered patentable at least for the reasons advanced with respect to the respective independent claims. The dependent claims are also patentable on their own merits since these claims recite other features of the invention neither disclosed, taught nor suggested by the applied art as will be apparent to the Examiner upon reviewing these claims.

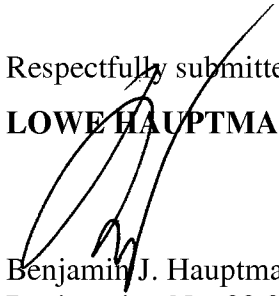
Each of the Examiner's rejections has been overcome. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that all claims are now in condition for allowance. Early and favorable indication of allowance is courteously solicited.

The Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned, Applicant's attorney of record, to facilitate advancement of the present application.

To the extent necessary, a petition for an extension of time under 37 C.F.R. 1.136 is hereby made. Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, including extension of time fees, to Deposit Account 07-1337 and please credit any excess fees to such deposit account.

Respectfully submitted,

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